

DOJ warns Delawareans about jury duty phone scam

The Delaware Department of Justice Consumer Protection Unit is alerting residents of a phone scam regarding missed jury duty service. Similar scams have been reported in the past.

In the scam, consumers receive a call from a (302) area code. After answering, a live caller referring to themselves as "Major," and claiming to have a judge on the line, tells the consumer that bench warrants have been issued for their arrest due to failure to appear for jury duty. The consumer is instructed to bring two Money Pak vouchers to the Leonard L. Williams Courthouse within an hour order to satisfy their warrant. The consumer is told that they will be reimbursed with a check once their name is cleared.

Delawareans eligible for jury duty are always notified about their obligation to serve jury duty by mail; never by telephone. Delaware Courts would never threaten immediate arrest in this way and under no circumstances would demand money.

DOJ also reminds residents to be extra diligent about this or other telephone scams by:

- Never agreeing to pay any fine or other money over the phone, including by purchasing a money order or gift card at a store and providing the number to someone over the phone or by email. Government agencies do not take payments this way.
- Not answering calls from unknown numbers or unfamiliar persons. Scams can be "spoofed" to appear to be coming from a local number, even though the call is originating from out of state or overseas.
- Hanging up on aggressive callers, particularly those who

threaten arrest.

Delawareans who receive calls about jury duty can check to see if they have been summoned by calling Delaware Superior Court Jury Services at (302) 255-0800 for New Castle County, (302) 735-1901 for Kent County, or (302) 855-7055 for Sussex County.

Consumers who believe they may have been scammed may call the Consumer Protection Unit's toll-free Consumer Hotline at (800) 220-5424, or e-mail consumer.protection@delaware.gov. Consumers can also report scammers' phone numbers to the National Do Not Call Registry and file complaints at www.donotcall.gov.